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ABSTRACT

Though bound by a number of political, economic, and institutional constraints on options for staff development, Niagara College (Ontario) made a commitment to design a formal human resource development strategy to meet the needs of all college staff through the 1990s. In 1982, a Human Resource Development Committee was mandated to assess current practices and policies, develop an in-house training system for employee development, identify new sources for staff development, and prepare training materials. As a first step, the committee began to assess the "knowns and unknowns" of human resource development at Niagara. Three study groups were formed to survey the needs of different staff groups. Data from the surveys, recommendations, and a demographic profile of the staff were organized into briefs related to major committee agenda items. As cohesiveness and momentum developed, the committee established a problem-solving process which included information review, identification of relevant internal and external parameters, formative design, drafting and editing. One of the most difficult challenges was the creation of a guiding Statement of Human Resource Development, supported by an infrastructure of policies and procedures that became known as the Niagara College Human Resource Development Portfolio. A second pivotal step in the developmental phase was the conceptualization and acceptance of a career development model that categorized the human resource development needs of staff members in terms of different career phases, and developed policies and opportunities related to each phase. Though the system was formally adopted in 1986, the college still has administrative and financial barriers to overcome in demonstrating institutional commitment to the system and implementing it fully. (AJL)

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INNOVATIVE POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN A CANADIAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education

Professional File, Number 1, Spring 1987

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CSSHE Professional File

Innovative Policies and Practices For Human Resource Development In A Canadian Community College

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This is the first issue of the **Professional File**. *The purpose of the* **Professional File** *is to present one or more possible solutions to a current problem in post-secondary education. The solutions that will be described have been found to be effective on at least one campus. Topics and authors will be approved by the Publications Committee and the Executive Council of CSSHE. The* **Professional File** *will be published up to four times per year by CSSHE and will be distributed free of charge to CSSHE members. This first* **File** *presents a solution which Niagara College has employed successfully in assisting a highly stable staff respond to a rapidly changing environment. As editor of the* **File**, *I wish to express my appreciation to Nora McCardell and Jo-Anne Willment for their willingness to serve as the first authors in this series. I also welcome your comments and suggestions regarding this issue and future issues.*

Norman Uhl, Editor

ASSUMPTIONS

The implicit assumption behind the growing interest and investment of resources in human resource development in the public sector, including post-secondary educational institutions, is a conviction that such attention is of value (Austin, 1985). Human resource development is perceived to be a valuable practice for both the employing organization and for the individuals concerned (Srinivas, 1984). For the organization, commitment of attention and resources to employee development is perceived to lead to improved quality and quantity of production or accomplishment without a major increase in staffing. For the individual, Human Resource Development is believed to lead to twin benefits: an enhancement of competencies and a general development of the person, as opposed to a maintenance of competencies and disengagement of concern for employee development in other than the skill-specific realm. The underlying assumption that human resource development is a positive and constructive value is a reflection of the cultural basis of our society, as is the originally free-enterprise economic model of production on which it is based (Nash, 1985).

Coupled with the assumption of the positive value of employee development, a second, mutually exclusive, assumption affecting contemporary Canadian organizational behaviour must be noted. Change is impacting on all aspects of our society. The impact of accelerating change on organizational structures has created malfunctions, inefficiencies and ineffectiveness (Lee and Kunungo, 1984). To survive in our increasingly shrinking, competitive world, all societies and all social organizations must evolve mechanisms to help them adjust to continuous change. The resource bases of our private organizations are being adjusted to help cope with change. For instance, capital equipment in the manufacturing sector in Canada is being quickly replaced by advanced technologies which increase the sector's ability to compete and maintain market share. Similarly,

where possible, large, heavily capitalized manufacturing suppliers are decentralizing their physical plants and re-establishing as smaller, regional assembly facilities to better, faster and more efficiently meet the needs of their host industries or markets.

Creating few intrinsic difficulties in themselves, changes by employers to equipment or location can be accomplished with relative ease. This cannot be said for changes in the human capital of our organizations, by far the greatest investment, as well as cost, in the public sector in Canada. Human resources of organizations--public and private--cannot so easily be replaced with alternatives guaranteed to perform in new and better ways to improve the organization's competitive performance. According to the human resource development model, such resources have the capacity to be developed to meet most new needs and challenges facing their employers (Heneman et al. 1980). This perspective can and has been applied to post-secondary educational institutions in Canada (Konrad, 1985). The purpose of this paper is to describe the evolution of a portfolio of innovative policies and practices for human resource development in an Ontario community college in the 1980s. At the outset, however, it is important to outline the institutional parameters within which the development and implementation of these human resource development initiatives took place.

CONSTRAINING PARAMETERS

The Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology were established in 1965 by the Ontario government in response to a continental need to produce a better educated and better trained labour force. The model adopted by Ontario to provide this training, unlike the one evolved by most other Canadian jurisdictions, did not create a junior college or feeder system for the traditional provincial universities. Rather, it deliberately developed an alternative and theoretically equal post-secondary educational route to the university system for the burgeoning number of secondary school graduates of the '60s and '70s. Twenty-two colleges were established across Ontario, each initially designed to serve a discrete population of about equal numbers.

Since their inauguration in 1966 and 1967, confusion has persisted (both within these organizations and without) in comprehending the complexity and variety of their mandates; their markets; their clients; their programs; their services and their delivery methods. With the passage of two decades, these factors have become more complex and more diverse.

The populations served contemporarily by Ontario community colleges may be summarized as being of four types: (1) newly graduated secondary school students, aged 18 to 21, taking post-secondary education and training up to the technician (two year) and technologist (three year) levels; (2) older unemployed adults subsidized for up to fifty-two weeks by several income support programs to undertake skill specific training or various forms of academic upgrading leading to job placement or possible acceptance within a post-secondary program; (3) employed members of the work force being trained or retrained in a multiplicity of programs designed to respond to community employer-based training requirements; and (4) youth development and job placement services attempting to alleviate unemployment in the age range of 17 to 29. It is important to be cognizant of the diversity of the population mix served by the colleges. This point relates directly to the human resource development needs of the staff assigned to each of the four major client-clusters.

Each of the four client-clusters is funded, primarily, through government grants. The majority of grant allocations for the CAAT system are now drawn from two major provincial ministries: Colleges and Universities, which is concerned exclusively with the first client-cluster--post-secondary-- mentioned above, and Skills Development, through which funding related to the three other client-clusters is funnelled. Additional governmental sources of income may be channelled through the Ontario Ministries of Industry, Trade and Technology and Agriculture and the Federal Canada Employment and Immigration Commission. Since the end of the 1970s, the timing, issuance and extent of major grant income has become less and less predictable. This has resulted in increased uncertainty and competitiveness within and between CAATs, as well as mal-alignment of traditional governing and managing functions. The increasingly unpredictable nature of the annual budgetary process in colleges is but one instance of their continued politicization.

The most limiting and containing impact on individual colleges of ongoing direct and indirect political interference has been the role of the provincial Ministry of Colleges and Universities in the negotiation of collective agreements for academic and support staff bargaining units and the terms and conditions of employment for administrative staff. Three classes of employees and these three only are available to work at each college. Their work arrangements and compensation packages are centrally determined. No provisions are made for flexibility in either assignment type or remuneration. Members of these three classes of employee--academic, support and administrative--on the surface, not an unusual trio in an educational milieu, work with from one to possibly all of the four client-clusters described, despite funding origin. Increasingly, the match between staffing patterns prescribed centrally and local service requirements is disharmonious. An anomaly of the CAAT system must be noted at this point. Unlike colleagues in the universities in Ontario, academic managers--

Chairmen and Deans--are not members of the academic bargaining unit. On appointment to management, their seniority within the Union ceases. They are unable to undertake the functions of teaching masters and, with time, are perceived to be less and less "academic" and more and more "administrative". This translates into an unfortunate schism within the academic or educational services of most colleges and directly impacts on any human resources development initiatives attempted by CAATs.

Further, the anti-academic bias of the CAATs decreed from their inauguration through selection of teaching staff based on personal experience in services, business or industry as opposed to education or teaching, was perpetuated in approved college funding patterns and honed by local and provincial union-management disputes over resource allocations. Thus professional development of employees of the academic bargaining unit tended to be viewed as an unaffordable "nice to have". Preference was given, throughout the history of the colleges, to increasing the numbers of academic staff as opposed to improving their productivity through the application of enlightened human resource development practices. The same concept applies to support staff where increased hires were viewed as preferable to improved individual or departmental productivity. With the recession of the early '80s, the move by the late '70s, to freeze administrative staff numbers so as to continue an unhampered hiring mode of teaching staff, changed to a deliberate reduction of administrative numbers. Workload on remaining managers--academic and otherwise--has more than doubled as a consequence. Likelihood of acceptance of human resources development at this time with a concomitant lack of resources assigned to this function is not great.

The role of human resource development within the complex internal college organizational environments which have evolved to cope with the mixes of services, client populations, grants and staff, has been receiving increasing recognition since the early 1980s. A provincial study team determined in 1985 that professional development of teaching and academic administrative staff was a prime requisite if the CAAT system was to survive into the 1990s (Skolnik, 1985).

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AT NIAGARA COLLEGE

Throughout the 1970s, human resource development at Niagara was addressed on an informal, inconsistent, and ad hoc basis. Limited opportunities were available to teaching staff while administrative and support staff found most of these opportunities to be inaccessible and/or inappropriate to their needs. With an aging college staff in the 1980s, technological changes and fewer new staff hires, the institutional need for staff development across all staff groups had become critical.

With a recognition of political, economical and institutional constraints, Niagara College established a commitment to the design of a formal, valid and omnibus human resource development strategy to meet the needs of all college staff through the 1990s. To achieve this objective, the Human Resource Development Committee was mandated in 1982 to:

(1) assess current practices and policies;
(2) develop an in-house training system for employee development;
(3) identify new sources for staff development; and
(4) prepare materials to promote new directions.

The Mandate gave the Human Resource Development Committee an opportunity to initiate institutional change, to formulate new directions and to facilitate new opportunities for college staff.

ACCEPTING THE ROLE OF CHANGE AGENTS

The size and focus of the Mandate was initially staggering to the Committee. Members questioned the amount of time required to realize the Mandate, the unlikely prospect of local union support for any "system" developed by management in the absence of contract requirements and skepticism over the College's ability to finance the presumably overwhelming costs of any new human resource development system. Committee members expressed concerns over their lack of "expertise" in the area of human resource development and consequential inability to forge the new directions dictated in the Mandate. These presumptions of failure fuelled Committee speculation about the College's "realistic" commitment to human resource development and doubts about the intent of those involved in the design of the Mandate. Interestingly, these questions originated with members who served on the senior management team responsible for the assignment of the Mandate. For these members, the transition from the role of administrator (i.e. setting out the Mandate) to the role of facilitator (i.e. fulfilling the Mandate) was a difficult evolution.

Committee ambivalence gradually subsided with time, repeated validations from the President and on-going discussion meetings. Over this period, the Committee slowly began to consider what the Mandate would require and the ways it could be addressed. The progression into this problem-solving phase signified readiness to assume responsibility for agency, facilitation and ownership of the assigned Mandate and was a significant step forward in the process of developing a human resource system for Niagara College.

NURTURING THE POTENTIAL FOR SUCCESS

In reviewing the potential for human resource development within organizations, Odiorne (1984) has noted the importance of strategic planning, creative goal setting and explicit planning. He suggests these activities are critical stimulants to aid staff in their new roles as strategic planners, to stir imaginations, to identify solutions and to nurture the process of change. To ensure the Committee environment was challenged and encouraged, a Secretariat, composed of the two authors of this paper and an Executive Secretary, was formed to oversee infusion of new ideas, information and directed activities.

The Secretariat sought to nurture the work of the Committee in several ways: to positively reinforce the work of a fledgling Committee, to build momentum for Committee action, to introduce new ideas related to the human resource development trends and practices in business and industry, to maintain attendance through non-cohercive means, and to identify, selectively organize and manage Committee work to nurture the process of planned change. To enhance the potential for creative thinking, reflection and discussions, Committee activities were structured to introduce new perspectives and information (e.g. research information, case studies). Committee tasks, activities and workloads were arranged to blend cognitive (i.e. informational), conceptual and interpersonal stimulation. Decision-deadlines were structured to promote a sense of "progress" and momentum.

STRATEGIC METHODS FOR NURTURING CHANGE

In assessing the literature on the management of change in organizations, Goodman (1982) notes the importance of "matching" the methods of change with the properties of the institution undergoing change. Berger (1981) suggests that open systems, characterized by large numbers of members with loosely knit associations or relationships require change methodologies which are diverse, diffuse, complex and rigorous. Weick (1982) and Berger (1981) suggest the following strategies for managing change in "open systems":

(1) concentrate efforts on one or two critical problems;
(2) learn the history of the issue (e.g. players, roles, positions, timeframes, outcomes);
(3) build coalitions to mobilize support; and
(4) use the formal system of committee memberships and the informal system of discussions and mediation.

The open nature of the college environment, the history of change at the college, the vested interests of subsystems within the college and the focus of the Mandate suggested open system methodologies had to be used if the Committee response was to be accepted by the community for which it was designed.

Preparatory Phase. As a first step, the Secretariat began to informally assess the "knowns and unknowns" of human resource development at the college. A tentative framework or masterplan of short and long-term priorities for Committee attention was drafted and utilized as a guiding light for direction and perspective. This preparatory strategic plan established an organizational strategy based on priorities. A plan of concrete actions was an essential component in the Committee's ability to cope with the two implicit but critical conceptual challenges of the Mandate:

(1) What should be developed?
(2) How should "it" be developed?

The first step in the plan employed was to encourage Committee initiation of a sequence of discrete and manageable information gathering tasks. These activities served two objectives: to mobilize the Committee into structured activity and to generate productive information on current human resource trends at the college. To achieve these objectives, the Committee created a substructure of three Study Groups representing each of the staff groups at the college. Each Study Group was chaired by a member of the larger Committee and was composed of a small number of staff responsible for assessing and expressing the human resource development needs, interests and opinions of their respective staff group.

Each Study Group was assigned responsibility for the development, completion and analysis of a survey to assess the human resource needs of their respective staff group. A member of the Secretariat worked with each Study Group to assist in the preparation of survey questions and to ensure similar information was gathered across Groups. The needs assessment activity spanned a nine-month period and represented input from 47% of the college staff complement.

The results of these three surveys provided interesting comparative qualitative and quantitative data related to the human resource development preferences of three employee groups within a college. Distinct differences were noted in the human resource development requests and delivery format preferences for the groups. For example, while each group felt the college should provide professional development opportunities, only 30% of all participants believed the college should pay for 100% of the associated costs. Based upon all survey results, a total of 23 Recommendations for Human Resource Development were received by the Committee from the three Study Groups. While there were some common recommendations across Groups, there was considerable variance between Groups in the implementation

strategies for these recommendations.

The preparatory phase activities also included completion of a cross-sectional statistical analysis of the demographic profile of the college staff community for the years 1974, 1979 and 1984. Demographic scenario projections for the years 1989 and 1994 were generated to indicate age and length of service profiles for future years. These profiles were undertaken exclusively by the Secretariat and led to the identification of demographic factors relevant to strategic human resource planning at the College.

Developmental Phase. The needs assessment, recommendations and demographic profiles yielded information on specific dimensions of institutionally-based human resource needs and trends. While the recommendations were numerous, they presented only limited consensus. As well, the statistical data profiled college manpower trends and strategic needs, but did so in the absence of practical constraints. While this data was rich in content, the Committee found it difficult to translate applied research and specific information into a macro conceptual framework of new "system" directions.

To assist in the process of information integration, data was organized into summary formats related to major agenda items. These briefs included information gathered from the college sources, external research (such as models, case histories) and a list of Committee options. The preparation of these briefs was time-consuming, but enabled the members to fully utilize internal and external information.

As cohesiveness and momentum developed over time, the Committee established a problem-solving process which included information review, identification of relevant internal and external parameters, formative design, drafting and editing. These steps provided a structured procedure which could be used to resolve specific issues (micro-focus), to undertake developmental activities (formative) or to conceive entirely new directions (macro-focus). This process provided the Committee with a procedure for the generation of ideas and directions which could be realized with the drafting of opportunities and policies by the Secretariat.

In an attempt to sustain energy, interest and group momentum across the intensive seven month developmental period, agendas were carefully structured to ensure a blend and balance between "easy" and "thorny" issues, "conceptual" and "procedural" issues and "minor" and "major" issues. The meeting schedule of the Committee was also structured to provide a balance between short and lengthy meetings and "wrap-up" versus "planning" meetings. Attendance during the developmental phase was consistent in spite of the often difficult, complex and time-consuming nature of the work. While there could be many explanations for this, the intentional structuring and balancing of agendas served to create unique opportunities and subtle unpredictability. Several members noted one afternoon that these meetings were "different" from others in that they addressed diverse issues which were of personal and institutional interest while providing opportunities and time to think, to conceptually and philosophically focus, to use different cognitive skills, to exchange ideas and to extend oneself into new areas. This was a significant comment in light of the prevailing reluctance of the Committee in 1982 to accept their role as agents of change.

DEVELOPMENTAL STRUCTURES

Philosophy. One of the most difficult challenges was the development of a human resource development "system" in the absence of some overriding guiding philosophy of purpose, objective or previously articulated institutional commitment. It was difficult for the Committee to intuitively conceptualize the types of directions that should be developed, the form which they should take or the parameters which should prevail without an agreed upon goal or ideal.

The importance of ideals as benchmarks for facilitating development of change has been recognized in career (London, 1985), personal (Gendlin, 1981) and organizational (Goodman, 1982) literature. Each literature set suggests the potential for change is enhanced in the presence of an overarching vision of how things should be. It is perhaps easier for an individual or a group to work towards the creation of "something" if it can be conceived in relation to an agreed upon ideal or system of beliefs and values. The logic, utility, "belongingness" and sensibility of new ideas, concepts, plans and other ephemeral constructs can be established when evaluated in the context of a set of predetermined reference points, ideals or beliefs.

The development of an overarching college position on human resource development was a major step in the development of a subsequent strategy or "system" for Niagara College. The Commitee's agreement on a clearly articulated philosophical position or statement on human resource development made it possible to visualize the directions which could be taken, the opportunities which could be logically supported and the mechanisms to enable staff access to these opportunities. Because of the guiding significance of this philosophical position, the development of The Niagara College Statement of Human Resource Development was one of the most difficult developmental structures to create. The principles identified included:

- identification of the human resource development responsibilities of the college and the employee;
- shared commitments between the college and employee;
- commitment to an annual planning process based upon a consultative process; and
- specific institutional commitments to college staff.

Based on this philosophy, the Committee began to consider an infrastructure to support the Statement and the policy vehicles required to realize the Statement. The infrastrucure of policies and procedures subsequently developed was identified as the Niagara College Human Resource Development Portfolio.

Models. A second pivotal step in the developmental phase was the conceptualization and acceptance of a model to identify and systematically organize the factors influencing the human resource development needs of staff. A model was envisaged and subsequently prepared on the basis of the career cycle of any employee within the college. The career development model was based on the observation that the human resource development needs of a staff member vary with different career phases:

(1) early career phase marked by the need for orientation and/or certification activities;
(2) mid-career phase marked by the need for education/training opportunities, alternative work experience to maintain contact with changing industry practices and technologies; and on-the-job skill maintenance or upgrading; and
(3) late career phase marked by consideration of retraining potential, retirement planning or orientation to new job requirements.

Policies. The Human Resource Development Committee undertook to develop human resource policies and opportunities to address each of the three phases in the College Career Model. The information gathered through Study Group activities and recommendations provided specific contexts and directions for the design of these policies. The range of policy development was broad and addressed issues of accessibility through to leave of absence policies and payment of costs provisions.

The development of policy vehicles was a manageable and logical task based on a guiding philosophy and a systematic conceptual model. Both of these developmental structures made it possible to evaluate "what" was required within a set of parameters. Once these options had been selected, the objectives and governing procedures for these opportunities could be articulated in policy format. Collectively, these policies serve as the innovative tools for the human resource development "system" developed at Niagara College.

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE

Following preview and feedback opportunities by college staff and union representatives, the Human Resource Development Portfolio system was formally adopted by the Niagara College Board of Governors in January, 1986. Since that time, institutional response to the system has been both formally and informally monitored. Formal tracking of policy utilization over this first year of implementation indicates that "facilitating" human resource policies governing time release, cost and travel assistance have been used most frequently by College staff. Typically, these policies have been used to support traditional course and seminar activities. These forms of education/training are valued by staff, can be conveniently arranged and are perceived by staff and supervisors as appropriate and legitimate human resource development pursuits.

To date, there is minimal evidence of planned or directed initiation of policy use for short or long-term planning within the major post-secondary functional divisions at the College. These divisions employ the majority of the College members of the academic bargaining unit and represent the staff with the longest records of continuous college service. Conversely, the functional divisions working with non post-secondary students and employing a more homogenous mix of academic, managerial and support staff, have grasped the Portfolio's potential as both an integrated departmental planning tool and an individual career development instrument. The differing pattern between the post-secondary and non post-secondary divisions towards the system is consistent with other observed HRD-related differences between these functional areas. As a group, staff within the growing non post-secondary college divisions demonstrate greater career diversity, flexibility, self-reliance and adaptive attitudes than their traditional post-secondary counterparts.

Since the introduction of the human resource development system at Niagara, two significant dimensions of institutional response have been informally observed. These are the dimensions of commitment and institutional implementation of human resource development commitment. Each of these dimensions can be evaluated in the context of daily college administrative, financial and personnel priorities and decisions.

Commitment. Institutional response to commitment exists on a continuum ranging from minimal acknowledgement of human resource development needs (low commitment) through to fully integrated commitment (high commitment). As indicated in Table 1, at least five levels of increasingly greater institutional commitment can be identified.

To date, the non post-secondary divisions at Niagara have tested and benefitted at several levels from the human resource development commitment of the College. Amongst the post-secondary divisions, there remains doubt about the commitment of the college and the system opportunities made available to college staff. Doubt and hesitency about any institutional "system" is diminished

TABLE 1
Levels of HRD Commitment

Level	Institutional Response
1	Recognition of HRD Needs
2	Informal HRD Practices in Response to Recognized Needs
3	Formalized HRD Policies & Planning for Employees, Departments
4	Development of In-house HRD Strategies & Support Structures
5	Integrated Linking of HRD to Performance and Institutional Planning Objectives

when supervisors seek to support and facilitate action for their staff. This is true for Niagara's human resource development system as well. Staff who actively or passively question the likelihood of utilizing or benefitting from the College's commitment, have reassessed these perceptions when supervisors have sought to initiate, support or otherwise facilitate developmental requests for, and on behalf, of their staff. To meet this challenge, and to activate Niagara's commitment, supervisors must demonstrate talent, flexibility, foresight, a willingness to support self-starters and an ability to encourage staff who might otherwise decline or overlook opportunity. In short, the acceptance and success of the Niagara human resource development system has been dependent on the ability of front-line staff to demonstrate a human resource development commitment, at some level, with and for their staff.

At each level in the commitment continuum, employees, employee associations or unions, human resource development service professionals and college managers have sought to raise issues and concerns. In the best of all worlds, these four interest groups will agree fully on numerous factors related to commitment such as cost recovery (e.g. how will costs be borne, by whom and what proportion); the direction, kind and style of training, the use to which training can and will be put and the role of seniority in the selection and process. While these factors are real and must be worked through, they must not become the focus of deflected energy and resources if long-term benefits are to accrue to all interest groups at the College.

Barriers to Niagara's efforts to demonstrate commitment have continued to represent a significant challenge to the goal of managed, integrated human resource development services at our college. To overcome these barriers, the institution must be prepared to counteract ignorance, misunderstanding (both deliberate and otherwise), obstruction and fear of personal and institutional change on the parts of all four interest groups. Understanding and consensus must be obtained in order for the institution to realize the greatest commitment to, and benefits from, a human resource development program.

As greater levels of institutional commitment are realized, the opportunity for control of the system by individual users decreases. This is not a fact peculiar to human resource development, but is true of all aspects of administration whether such processes as tax collection, parking allocation or classroom scheduling are considered. The more formalized and evolved the system, the less opportunity for individual control or manipulation. This fact may be relevant to one of the greatest stumbling blocks to integrated human resource development service at Niagara and elsewhere--the misperception that choices or actions of individuals are in and of themselves human resource development. Creating procedures to plan, direct or channel these choices offer opportunities for direction, personal and institutional goal-setting.

Implementation. As an extension of commitment, Niagara has had to demonstrate an ability to "deliver", to provide opportunity with equitable access, to communicate criteria and standards in advance, to fulfill appropriate requests and to respond in a clear and understandable manner. Every staff member within the College will judge the human resource development commitment of their college on the basis of these operational criteria and their personal experiences.

Like commitment, implementation exists on a continuum ranging from minimal delivery (low level) through to the establishment of sophisticated institutional support and delivery structures (high level). This continuum is indicated in Table 2.

TABLE 2
Levels of HRD Implementation

Level	Institutional Response
1	Passive Support for HRD Initiatives of College Staff
2	Facilitating and Enabling HRD through Formal Policy Supports
3	Development of an HRD Model to Establish Directed and Reoccurring HRD
4	Establishment of In-house Delivery HRD Services
5	Establishment of A HRD Tracking System to Integrate Delivery, Performance & Budgetary Planning

The Niagara system addresses the policy, model and tracking elements essential to the human resource development operational process. To date, funding limitations and interest group pressures, however, have made it difficult to offer in-house human resource development services with systematic delivery. In the absence of an in-house human

resource development advocacy and facilitating service, effective and efficient human resource development planning and support is difficult to sustain across the College. This situation will only be resolved if and when interest groups and college decision-makers are prepared to act on difficult choices and establish the relative importance of human resource development to other services and activities.

CONCLUSIONS

Canada's future social and economic development is directly tied to continued growth of our service sector (Canada, 1981). That growth will occur in a period of unprecedented escalating change well into the 21st Century. Colleges are part of that service sector and will continue to find themselves coping with change within the context of a relatively fixed human resource base. To achieve credibility as an institutional and personal coping strategy for change, College human resource development must be conceived and presented as an integrated organizational strategy with purpose, benefits, structure and direction.

Given the cost of staff services, it is very likely that interest in College human resource development services will plateau if College human resource development can not be understood as more than a series of workshops or needs assessments. If the College human resource development "field" is to mature, College HRD professionals must be able to articulate a role, identity, strategy and direction for their human resource development activities. The developmental process and Career Model developed by Niagara College provides a conceptual and practical framework to meet these requirements. The results from this work demonstrate how Niagara College has sought to formulate comprehensive and strategic human resource development directions which will have organizational impact and enable the college to meet its social and corporate responsibilities.

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